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SENSITIVE
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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/PASCUAL/RAMCHAND

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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [ASEC](#)
SUBJECT: GAZA UPDATE DECEMBER 29, 1800 LOCAL

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Airstrikes and rocket fire continue in the Gaza Strip as of 1800 local on December 29. Gaza medical, UN and NGO sources report at least 308 Palestinian deaths since December 27, and at least 900 Palestinians in Gaza have been treated in hospitals for injuries due to IAF fire. Dozens of Palestinians were injured in fresh clashes with the IDF and border police throughout the West Bank. President Abbas said he will hold a meeting of all factions, including Hamas, late December 29, and called on Hamas to accept an unconditional ceasefire. End summary.

Continuing Airstrikes, Rocket Barrages

¶2. (SBU) IAF airstrikes struck additional targets throughout the Gaza Strip through 1800 local on December 29. At 1420, Gaza-based contacts report that four members of al-Quds Brigades (PIJ military wing), including a senior al-Quds leader, Ziyad Abu Tayr, and a bystander (a young boy) were killed and three others were injured when an Israeli rocket hit near gunmen who were about to launch rockets in Abbasan al-Kabira (Khan Yunis area). From 1340-1530, IAF ordnance destroyed an al-Qassam Brigades training facility and several suspected operational and training camps in Jabaliya and Bayt Lahiya. There were no reports of injuries in these strikes. Gaza-based contacts also report that the IAF and Israeli naval vessels fired rockets at buildings on Gaza's harbor, and the IAF destroyed several more Gaza City police stations.

¶3. (SBU) At 1530 local, militants fired two rockets towards Sderot. Six other rockets landed in open areas outside the Gaza Strip from 1400-1700. No injuries or damage were reported. At least 51 Qassam and Grad-type rockets had struck Israel on December 29 as of 1800.

Dozens Injured in Fresh IDF-Palestinian
Clashes in the West Bank

¶4. (SBU) In Hebron, clashes with the IDF continue following a march organized by Hebron University student leaders near Shalala Street. Palestinian press report that 31 students were hit with rubber-coated bullets, and others suffered from tear gas inhalation. In Jayus village (near Salfit), at least 11 Palestinians were injured around 1400 in clashes with the IDF at the entrance of the village. At around 1230, an IDF force entered Kharbtha Bani Harith village (west of Ramallah) and raided the family home of Mohammed Yacub Injas, the perpetrator of the stabbing attack in Kiryat Sefer earlier today.

¶5. (SBU) PA security services arrested Husam Hanani, the Hamas mayor of Bet Furik village (near Nablus), who had issued a statement attacking the PA and blaming it for the IDF operation in Gaza. The PA security also arrested Hamas members Bashar Hija, Bilal Shalal, Luay Hammad and Abd

al-Ra'uf Mlaytat for incitement or illegal demonstrations.

Abbas: We Condemn "Israeli Aggression,"
Call for Hamas to Accept Ceasefire

¶6. (SBU) In a PLO Executive Committee (ExComm) meeting on December 29, President Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) said he will call representatives of all factions, including Hamas and PIJ, to discuss the situation in the Gaza Strip. Abbas condemned the "massive Israeli aggression" on Gaza and urged the international community to intervene, adding that he had repeatedly called for the restoration of the truce in Gaza to alleviate hardships of the Gazans. He thanked Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Libya for sending supplies to Gaza, and said "the Arabs have been fulfilling their duties especially the brotherly Egypt." (Note: Abbas is expected to meet with West Bank Hamas leaders, along with members of Fatah and other PLO factions, late December 29. Hamas invitees reportedly include Nasser al-Din al-Sha'ar. President's Office contacts say Abbas will discuss the situation in Gaza and emphasize the need for Hamas to accept an unconditional ceasefire. End note).

¶7. (SBU) Hamas PLC member Mushir al-Masri told press December 29 that President Abbas' statement is a political bluff, and that Abbas should release all Hamas prisoners, not talk about contacts and consultations with factions, if he is serious about national unity.

¶8. (SBU) In a message from prison, Fatah's Marwan Barghuthi called on all factions to hold a national dialogue conference

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within two weeks, and urged unity among all factions. His message condemned Israeli airstrikes in Gaza as "massacres against the Palestinian people." Fatah leaders in Nablus announced that Fatah will postpone anniversary celebrations scheduled for the beginning of January, as "now is an appropriate time to confront the Israeli aggression on the Gaza strip, not celebrate." Jerusalem Fatah leaders say they will hold a candlelight protest at Damascus Gate in Jerusalem late December 29.

¶9. (SBU) Palestinian activists held a small protest in front of the French Consulate in East Jerusalem on December 29. The same group is expected to hold a protest in front of the U.S. Consulate General's East Jerusalem facility on December

¶30.
WALLES